MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	**AUTHORITY**		
DATE:	**26 JANUARY 2017**	**REPORT NO:**	**CFO/010/17**
PRESENTING OFFICER	**DEPUTY CHIEF FIREOFFICER**		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**DEB APPLETON**	**REPORT AUTHOR:**	**DEB APPLETON**
OFFICERS CONSULTED:			
TITLE OF REPORT:	**CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (CFOA) CHANGE PROGRAMME**		

APPENDICES:	

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of progress made in relation to the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) change programme.

Recommendation

2. That Members note the content of this report.

Introduction and Background

3. Members may be aware that CFOA (the professional body of the UK fire and rescue service) has been reviewing its purpose, structure and governance arrangements for several months. The primary driver for the review is to enable CFOA to better support and advocate for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) at a national level in the light of key changes such as a move to Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) inspection and an increased focus on emergency services collaboration. CFOA has recently provided an update on progress in relation to their change programme and that update forms the basis of this report.

Intended Benefits for Fire and Rescue Authorities

4. A key role for CFOA is to co-ordinate professional Fire and Rescue Service activity across the UK in ways that provide clear benefits for FRA's. The changes being put in place are intended to maximise the value that FRA's receive for the investment they make, by providing the following benefits:

- Development of common operating guidance to be used by fire and rescue services, ensuring best practice and services for the public. This will extend further into supporting the development of other professional standards;

- Coordination of activities to improve efficiency which will include shared activity on research and development and joint procurement;
- A greater voice for FRAs through their representative on the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC – details below) on the changes affecting operational issues in the sector;
- Co-ordination of mobilisation to, and management of, large-scale emergencies affecting local communities (with police and ambulance services);
- Delivering efficiencies through joint working with the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) where appropriate;
- Sharing best practice on collaboration;
- Enhanced support to professional development and operational leadership;
- Support to workforce development activities (including diversity and retained duty systems); and
- Undertaking benchmarking activities and supporting publication of information for the public

5. In addition to the above, officers employed by FRA's will benefit significantly from having links to networks of professional support; the ability to share best practice with colleagues; and access to centrally prepared guidance for the sector.

Drivers for change

6. There are a number of reasons for making the changes now. In these austere times, it is important to demonstrate more clearly the benefits FRA's receive from their support of CFOA. The reasons include:

- Ensuring that CFOA continues to make an important contribution to supporting FRAs and the UK Fire Sector;
- Putting in place the capacity at a leadership level to support improved links between the fire sector and UK governments. The current CFOA operating model creates a lack of continuity, which can sometimes limit innovation and progress;
- Currently senior leaders of CFOA are also leaders of their own organisations. This can lead to difficulties in remaining impartial and promoting inclusivity and a new operating model will help to overcome this;
- The (expected) high level duty to collaborate with other emergency services;
- In England, the move of responsibility for Fire to the Home Office and the emerging Fire Reform Programme; and
- The need to ensure that the Association addresses the needs of the fire sector across the UK (i.e. including all of the devolved administrations).

Guiding Principles

7. In determining the changes to the Association that are essential, CFOA have been guided by some important principles:

- Individual FRA's are sovereign, decision-making bodies, responsible for overseeing the delivery of fire and rescue services in their area;

- Senior management teams are responsible for 'operationalising' policy decisions made by their fire and rescue authority;
- Notwithstanding the above, it makes sense to co-ordinate and support local political activity at a national level;
- It also makes sense to co-ordinate and support local professional/operational activity at a UK-wide level (CFOA's role)
- Whatever CFOA invests resources in should add value for FRA's.

Key elements of the proposals

8. The diagram in Appendix 1 sets out the proposed future fire sector model. The key milestones to enable this model to become operational are:

Establishing a National Fire Chiefs Council

9. In 2011, CFOA established the FRS Council as an effective way to engage with services and debate national strategic issues to provide a steer to the CFOA Board. CFOA now proposes to build on this success and develop the reach and influence of the FRS Council so that it provides clear professional leadership to the sector on matters such as operational guidance, research and sharing best practice and indicates to stakeholders that the sector is able to lead and manage change. Therefore the FRS Council will be renamed the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), and will take on a number of new functions.

10. The NFCC will deal with issues relating to professional guidance, technical matters and operational activities and act as the professional contact between the UK fire sector and government. This model will give each FRA and their FRS a single position for the CFO/CE to influence national interests through the NFCC.

11. The NFCC will represent the whole of the UK FRS, recognising the different governance arrangements that exist, and actively work with the devolved administrations to ensure consistency, co-operation and where appropriate co-ordination.

12. The NFCC will enable greater engagement with partners such as the police, health bodies and youth services – extending and promoting the FRAs' and FRSs' strong track record in prevention and community safety.

Leadership of the NFCC

13. To build stronger relationships and improve communications with FRAs, the LGA (Fire Service Management Committee), governments and other stakeholders, CFOA has replaced the current Presidential model by a Chair of the NFCC who is a full time, paid employee with a term of office of between 2 and 4 years.

14. The longer term aim is for the costs of the Chair to be met via the Professional Partnership fee but for an initial period of up to two years, whilst the role is established and can demonstrate it adds value, the costs of the Chair will be met from CFOA reserves, rather than being funded by FRAs.

15. The role of the new NFCC Chair will be pivotal. He will be able to concentrate his time and focus on supporting the whole fire sector and securing influence with government on behalf of FRAs and CFOA Members.

16. The Chair will be supported by two, unpaid Vice-Chairs selected by the NFCC.

17. The Chair will represent the NFCC and will speak on 'operational' (not political) matters on behalf of the NFCC. It is envisaged that the Chairs of the co-ordination committees and agreed subject matter experts will be the spokespersons for specific media and information requests within their area of responsibility.

Work Programme

18. Individual FRAs set strategic priorities and policies. Within this framework, the NFCC will define and agree the operational priorities for CFOA in its Annual Plan. This will clearly demonstrate the value of the support that FRAs are receiving from CFOA's work. The plan will be shaped by incorporating the views expressed by Chief Fire Officers of local priorities and build on priorities articulated and agreed nationally by elected members (e.g. via the Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Service Management Committee (FSMC).

19. The NFCC will be supported by strategic co-ordination committees reflecting the fire sector needs across the whole of the UK. These committees will recommend priorities to be included in the NFCC Annual Plan and then in turn would be directed by the NFCC to deliver them. The work undertaken by the strategic co-ordination committees will encompass: the deployments to meet national incidents, joint work in areas such as procurement to remove duplication and secure efficiencies, and support to the development of professional standards and guidance to improve service delivery and transparency to the public.

20. The co-ordination committees would in turn be supported by project teams, CFOA online communities and newsletters, based initially on the arrangements which currently exist. This provides a wide and expert knowledge base that all FRSs can access and avoid 're-inventing the wheel'.

Membership and Fees

21. CFOA will continue as a charity and membership association with Individual Membership open to those equivalent to Area Manager and above in UK FRSs. Membership will automatically be triggered through their employing FRA paying the Professional Partnership fee. These members will have voting rights and will be responsible for electing the NFCC Chair.

22. There is already extensive sharing of experience and best practice across the CFOA networks, providing a major resource and potentially reducing duplication and costs. All FRS employees will be further encouraged to access guidance and information, sign up for relevant communications and make full use of CFOA's extensive resources such as the CFOA Communities funded through Professional Partnership fees.

CFOA Trustees

23. With the NFCC managing its annual programme of work for the sector, the role and membership of the current CFOA Board will change. The executive Board of directors will be replaced by a Board of Trustees representing Fire and Rescue Services including those in the devolved administrations, key stakeholders and independent members. The Trustees will manage the Association including the Headquarters functions, ensure appropriate governance and have oversight of the trading activities. They will establish a Performance Committee to manage the performance of the NFCC Chair.

Ongoing support

24. There are a number of activities which are currently undertaken within each Service where professional and financial benefits may result from a more collaborative, shared approach. In some cases, the reduction in duplication would not only save FRAs money but would also help to promote best practice and ensure a consistent approach.

25. CFOA will continue to promote the development of national co-ordinated activities ('hubs') building on existing arrangements where possible, as well as supporting a co-ordinated national response to national emergencies and incidents.

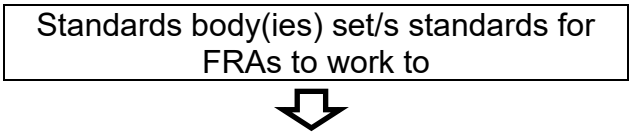
26. CFOA will also continue to encourage the sharing of best practice regarding emergency services collaboration between FRSs and other local services to enable decisions to be made at a local level which will improve public safety and secure efficiencies.

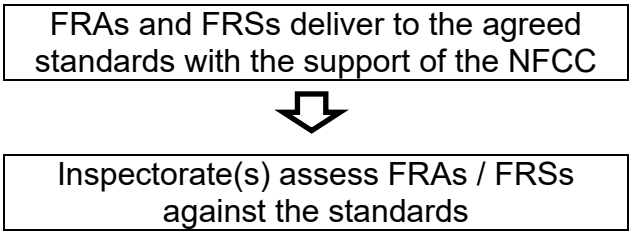
Inspection and Standards

27. There are two further changes which are being progressed at the same time as the changes CFOA is making which will affect some parts of the UK. These are the plan to establish an independent inspectorate for Fire in England and a proposal to create a standards body to be responsible for establishing professional standards, ideally with UK wide application.

28. CFOA's changes fit with these two other elements whilst recognising that there are different arrangements in the devolved administrations.

The diagram below outlines what is intended:





CFOA working with partners

29. As now, CFOA, the NFCC and the NFCC Chair will work with partners to progress the FRAs priorities and represent their senior managers.

30. For example, CFOA is meeting regularly with representatives of the LGA FSMC to discuss future priorities and the progress of the various changes taking place in England. The NFCC Chair has been invited to attend the FSMC to update elected members on developments in the fire sector. CFOA has established regular meetings with representatives of the FSMC to progress work around the English Fire Reform programme. Elected members are also involved in the separate workstreams around standards and inspection in England.

31. Not all of the changes CFOA is making fit with the different governance arrangements in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. However CFOA is continuing to explore those areas where there remains mutual benefit in continuing the support provided currently and to learn from these areas for the benefit of the whole sector.

Milestones

Autumn 2016	- Work to define the NFCC progressed
Sept – Nov 2016	- NFCC chair elected
Jan – Mar 2017	- New shadow CFOA Trustees
February 2017	- First meeting of the NFCC
April 2017	- New Operating Model goes live:
	Chair in role
	New CFOA Trustees
	NFCC fully operational

Equality and Diversity Implications

32. There are no specific equality and diversity implications resulting from this report. There are however, opportunities for MFRS to be involved in the process of developing the new standards (in this and other areas) and in influencing the development of inspection and peer review. Representations have already been

made to those coordinating these activities to offer support and contributions from MFRS.

Staff Implications

33. There are no staff implications resulting from this report.

Legal Implications

34. There are no direct legal implications contained within this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

35. The budget for membership of CFOA is £9,166 for the corporate subscription and £2,400 for individual subscriptions.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

36. It is hoped that the changes to the CFOA structure will benefit MFRA and provide opportunities for involvement in developing new standards and inspection processes as well as the NFFC being in a better position to influence at a national level than the current governance arrangements.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

37. Being part of a professional body that has a strong ability to influence at a national level will benefit the Authority and it is hoped that this benefit would be passed on to our communities. Influencing a consistent approach to standards and inspection should also benefit our communities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS